



KEYNOTE REMARKS

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U.S. Department of Transportation**

**Air Traffic Control Association
50th Annual Conference and Exposition**

**Grapevine, Texas
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It is always a pleasure to be with ATCA and to see so many old friends and colleagues. Let me convey both Secretary Mineta's and my best wishes on the 50th anniversary of ATCA's annual conference and exposition.

Fifty years is a long time – and a lot of aviation history was made back in those old CAA days. Speed records were broken. New airlines and routes were inaugurated. New aircraft types were introduced. And after a typical day in Washington, I can really identify with George F. Smith who, in 1955, became the first man to live after being ejected from a supersonic jet.

In January, we will observe another milestone – the two-year anniversary of Secretary Mineta's landmark Aero Club speech challenging us to modernize and transform our air transportation system. And as he said: "Starting right now."

But it was more than just a speech. We took the Secretary's words as our marching orders. Transformation has started *now* and is in full swing. Make no mistake about it. The Next Generation Air Transportation System initiative is the real deal – one of the most important aviation programs that government and industry stakeholders have undertaken in many years -- and is yet a further example of our determination to get out in front of the enormous changes in our air transportation system. We've got to manage it before it manages us.

Particularly heartening at this early stage is the unprecedented cooperation among the senior government leaders and their agencies that are working shoulder to shoulder to

align their programs and plans to the Next Generation System. And this spirit of cooperation is spilling over to partnerships with industry. People, like you, are checking their parochial interests and company badges at the door for the good of the country. I thank you for that, and I salute you.

We have already laid a solid foundation for the Next Generation System. The first real product of the effort came in December 2004 when we delivered an Integrated Plan to Congress. We did that with the critical assistance of some of the best thinkers in the Executive Branch and as well as among industry leaders – some of whom are in this room today.

It's nothing less than a strategic business plan, and it lays out a common vision for the Next Generation System. It establishes benchmarks for our success and a structure by which we can design and implement the changes we need to make. It will be updated and expanded each year going forward as we further define the Next Generation System's exact specifications and requirements. A "progress report" covering the past year's activities will be sent to Congress in January. But you don't have to wait until January; I want to report some of that progress to you this morning.

We have broken down the Integrated Plan into eight manageable pieces -- including safety, shared situational awareness, an agile air traffic system, weather, environment, and so forth -- and created an integrated product team, or IPT, for each activity. These IPTs will get us from generalities to specifics, and from objectives to deployment – in other words, real world improvements.

These teams of government and private sector technical experts will apply best practices to achieve their particular objectives. The IPTs will work closely with our stakeholders, like ATCA, to ensure that you have an early window on our thinking and that we take full advantage of your expertise along the way. I cannot stress enough how important ATCA's participation is to the success of the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

The primary responsibility for assembling and leading each IPT belongs to the Joint Planning and Development Office or JPDO. The JPDO is responsible for approving the IPTs' broad strategies as part of the Integrated Plan and ensuring that their plans and schedules are consistent with the overall roadmap and enterprise architecture.

Just as the JPDO process represented a bold departure in the way that federal agencies work together to achieve common objectives, we also envisioned a new and revolutionary way for government and the private sector to collaborate in achieving the Integrated Plan's objectives. We have to make sure that the solutions we adopt reflect the wisdom and perspective of the broadest range of stakeholders.

And that's where the innovative NGATS Institute comes in.

Established earlier this year, hosted by the Aerospace Industries Association, and co-chaired by the presidents of ATCA and the Air Transport Association, the Institute is a new alliance among organizations representing major aviation stakeholder communities. It allows them to get directly involved in the transformation process.

We have high expectations for the Institute. Its first task is to help populate the eight IPTs. And I hope you get involved. As I mentioned, we want to make sure the IPTs have the best and brightest experts industry can offer. We will also benefit from the extensive experience industry stakeholders have gained through other agencies' transformational initiatives.

In addition to recruiting, selecting and assigning private sector experts and technical resources to the IPTs, the Institute will be called upon to perform specific research in areas identified by the JPDO, and usually on a quick turnaround basis.

This process moves the private sector into a much bigger role than simply observing and commenting. The private sector is joining government as a full partner in the Next Generation System development process – something rarely achieved in government before, but a major priority for the Bush Administration.

All of these efforts will guarantee the establishment of a collective enterprise among key stakeholders to achieve the transformation, as well as to ensure that we fulfill our critical obligation to create a process that is transparent and fully open to public scrutiny.

The partnerships involved extend beyond our nation's borders. The importance of developing a future system is also clear to policymakers in Europe, where a comparable effort is well underway. This presents an opportunity not to be missed at this critical time for our nation's aerospace industry.

The opportunity to unite our efforts in creating a modernized, global system that provides interoperability would serve as a tremendous boost to the industry, fueling new efficiencies and consumer benefits on a global scale.

If we let this opportunity get away from us, on the other hand, we could end up with a patchwork of duplicative systems and technologies that would surely place additional cost burdens on an industry that's already struggling.

That's why we attach such great importance to developing a cooperative, global framework for the evolving air traffic management systems in the U.S. and Europe. The JPDO, the FAA and the Commission of the European Communities are working together to hammer out the specifics of a Memorandum of Understanding that will cement that relationship and lay out its parameters.

We intend to explore opportunities for working toward commonality of Air Traffic Management Systems by implementing compatible technologies in our respective ground

and air systems, and by developing common synchronized timelines for the implementation of the new technology. The key here is global interoperability.

There's more progress to report – tangible progress. We have already moved from the drawing board to the field and have begun conducting some exciting demonstration projects.

For example, last June in Danville, Virginia, NASA – a major JPDO partner agency -- carried out a highly successful demonstration of its new Small Aircraft Transportation System, or SATS. It was the first true transformational project, and so there is nothing small about it.

A whole new generation of safe and affordable small aircraft will be able to take advantage of the SATS enabling technology in places where these aircraft did not have reliable access before. This will take pressure off our busiest airports and convey benefits to literally thousands of smaller communities.

Another important milestone is Boeing's recent demonstration of the contribution that Network Enabled Operations – “NEO” – will make to the Next Generation system. It organized the demo in concert with the Department of Defense and other JPDO partners. The idea is simple in concept, daunting in execution: to provide a platform that enables everyone with a stake in our air transportation system to have real-time, simultaneous access to the same robust array of information. With this new network-centric shared awareness, decision makers can make far more timely decisions across a broad spectrum of responsibilities – safety, security, efficiency, and reliability.

An ADS-B demo project is also on deck in 2006. In addition, the FAA Joint Resources Council has reached a decision that allows the FAA to begin planning for the full development and implementation of ADS-B. A final decision is scheduled for July of next year.

If there's a single point I'd like you to take away, it's this: The JPDO has brought the 2025 NGATS Operational Concept into much greater focus and definition. After thorough analysis, it has confirmed and validated NGATS' ability to deliver two to three times today's capacity. We are clearly on the right path.

In contrast to today's system, the Next Generation System will be flexible, resilient, scalable and adaptive. Passengers will move from the airport curb to their airplane in 30 minutes or less. We do that with more security, less intrusion, and none of the hassles that we experience today. As I told a Congressional committee earlier this year: just remember the best day you ever flew. That's what we want to achieve for every passenger, every day in the Next Generation System.

The operational concept also emphasizes end-to-end strategic flow management with minimal individual flight interventions. The Next Generation System will be highly automated and highly network-centric, and that means that the right information will get

to the right person at the right time, keeping the nation safe while retaining smooth-running, air traffic-flow at up to three times the number of operations we currently handle.

With the Next Generation System, we will increasingly cut the cord between ground and air by putting more data directly into the cockpit of highly intelligent aircraft via sensors and satellites and what we like to call an “internet of the sky”.

Ultimately, air traffic management services will be tailored, and flights will be managed, based on individual aircraft and flight-crew performance capabilities. We can reward aircraft that have advanced capabilities and efficiencies, such as precision navigation and automated landing, by allowing them greater operating flexibility. We can also increase capacity by 300 percent while not only maintaining, but improving safety. It can be that good, and it *will* be that good.

The operational concept is great, but how do we get there? A map always helps. That’s what JPDO created in 2005: the NGATS Capability Roadmap. It lays out a high-level path, timelines, key transitions and sequences that direct us to completion of the 2025 system. Based on that roadmap, we developed an initial portfolio of needed policy, research and modernization efforts.

The JPDO has also conducted its first preliminary interagency program review. It identified six means by which interagency collaboration could advance Next Generation capabilities in the FY 2007 budget. These include jumpstarting ADS-B and NEO, synchronizing weather research, and defining Required Total System Performance levels of service. Remember what Secretary Mineta said: Transformation starts *now*; not ten years from now.

And at a time of fiscal constraints and declining Aviation Trust Fund revenues, one of the most important JPDO findings over the past year is that Next Generation System costs are reasonable. Approximately \$1.5 billion is spent annually on air transportation-related research. By better coordinating that research and tying it to the Integrated Plan, we are eliminating redundancies and maximizing the benefits of those private and public capital investments. Every dollar, program, and plan must now further the development of the Next Generation System.

In June, Secretary Mineta observed that the Next Generation System initiative may have an impact that is more far-reaching than just about anything he has been involved in throughout his 30-year tenure of public service (and counting). Given the Secretary’s long and distinguished career, that observation speaks volumes about what is taking place with NGATS. I hope that you too will answer the call and join us as we take our world-class air transportation system far into the future. With your continued help and support, I am convinced today more than ever that we will succeed in reaching our ultimate goal of a Next Generation Air Transportation System.

Thank you for inviting me to be with you day, and for your continued support and friendship.

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